

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE August 29, 2014

TO Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Mayor's Fair Park Task Force**

Next Wednesday, September 3, 2014, the City Council will be briefed by Linda Perryman Evans on an update on the Mayor's Fair Park Task Force.

The briefing materials are attached for your review.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael S. Rawlings'.

Michael S. Rawlings
Mayor

c: A.C. Gonzalez, City Manager
Warren M.S. Ernst, City Attorney
Craig D. Kinton, City Auditor
Rosa A. Rios, City Secretary
Daniel F. Solis, Administrative Judge
Ryan S. Evans, First Assistant City Manager
Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager

Forest E. Turner, Assistant City Manager
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
Charles M. Cato, (I) Assistant City Manager
Theresa O'Donnell, (I) Assistant City Manager
Jeanne Chipperfield, Chief Financial Officer
Sana Syed, Public Information Officer
Elsa Cantu, Assistant to the City Manager – Mayor & Council

FAIR PARK

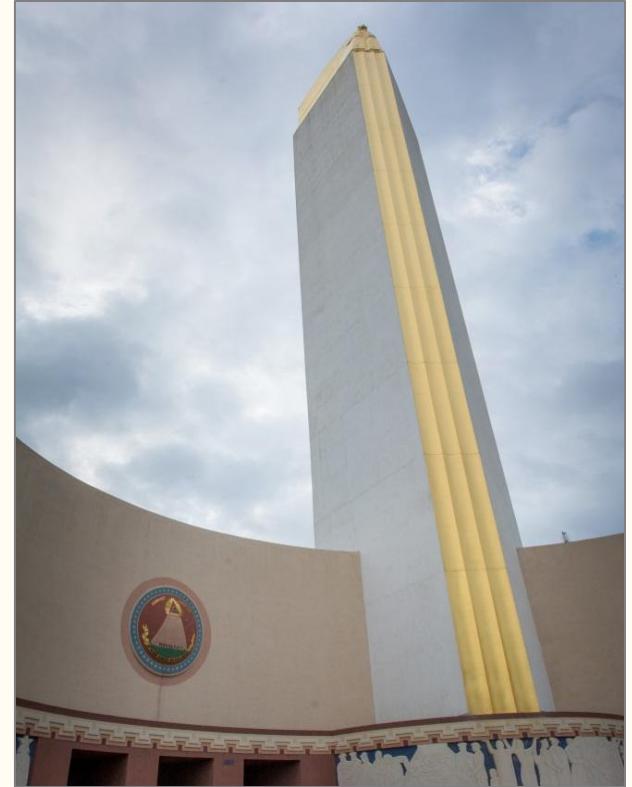
A PARK FOR ALL PEOPLE

Report of the Mayor's Fair Park Task Force | September 3, 2014

Presentation To City Council, Park & Recreation Board

FAIR PARK TASK FORCE

- Mayor Rawlings assembled informal nine-person task force to look at future of Fair Park
- We've developed ideas that can be used as framework for the revitalization of park
- We believe that with our suggestions, Fair Park can become the crown jewel of the Dallas Park system



WORK OF TASK FORCE

- It was important for us to understand what is and what isn't working in the park
- Over the past year, held 27 meetings, spent countless hours evaluating governance, uses
- Met with as many of the park's stakeholders as possible (those who direct FP groups or those who frequently use the park)

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

- Marsha Singer – Irishfest and Earth Day Texas
 - Susan Brosin – Earth Day Texas
 - Clint Weiss – Mardi Gras Texas Style
 - Bryan Buchanan – Buchanan's Flea Market
 - Chad and Nellie Montgomery – Texas Brewvolution
 - Joan Walne – Proposed Texas Music Hall of Fame
 - Brice Beaird – Proposed Texas Music Hall of Fame
 - Michael Jenkins – Music Hall and Dallas Summer Musicals
 - Dick Davis – Texas Discovery Gardens
 - Dr. Harry Robinson – African American Museum
 - Jack Bunning – Dallas Historical Society/Hall of State
 - Leo Hicks – South Dallas Fair Park Trust Fund City of Dallas Staff
 - Greg Hudson – Dallas Aquarium Staff
 - Ed Campbell – Ed Campbell Company
 - Willis Winters – Park and Recreation Department
 - Dapheny Fain – Kwanzaafest
 - Maria Munoz Blanco – Office of Cultural Affairs
 - Carol Littlejohn Chang – Balboa Park Conservancy
- ## Other Meetings
- Don Williams – Foundation for Community Empowerment
 - Antonio DiMambro – Urban Planner
 - Brent Brown – BC Workshop

WORK OF TASK FORCE

- Researched similar parks throughout the country, interviewed board president of San Diego's Balboa Park Conservancy
- Reviewed all reports and plans in the public record, the most influential documents are in the digital addendum
- Found great value in 2003 Fair Park Comprehensive Development Plan, which was only partially implemented

FAIR PARK ASSETS

- Ranked as America's 18th Most Visited City Park
- Dallas' largest park – 277 acres
- World's largest and most important Art Deco collection
- Located fewer than two miles from downtown
- Connected to parks and trails across the city
- Various obstacles are limiting its full potential

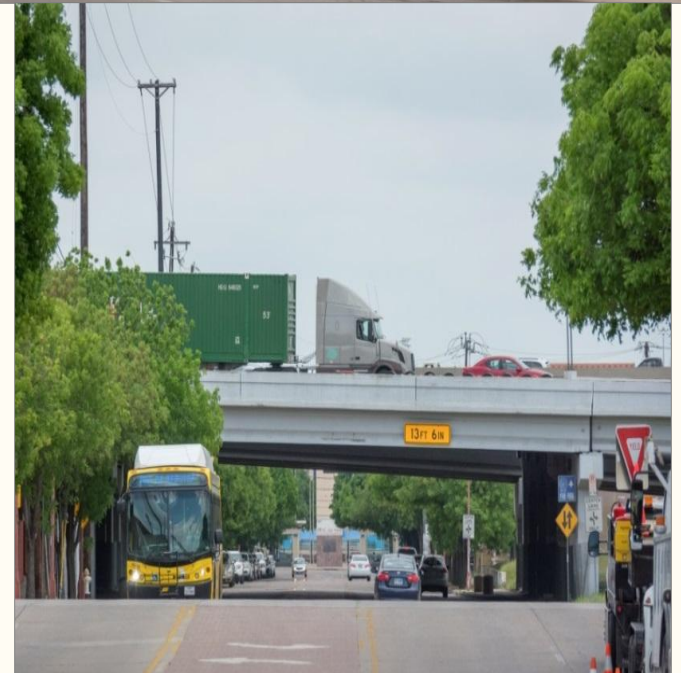
OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

We have three key recommendations to “put the Park Back in Fair Park:”

1. Enhance access and connectivity with the community and the city
2. Establish an open community park on the south side of Fair Park
3. Create a new independent nonprofit organization as the operational and marketing authority of the park

1. ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY

- Emphasize front door as Exposition/Parry, DART Station through enhanced signage, traffic flow
- Improve MLK Jr., all roads, entry points
- Extend Santa Fe Trail into Fair Park
- Lower I-30
- Build deck parks



2. OPEN PARK TO COMMUNITY

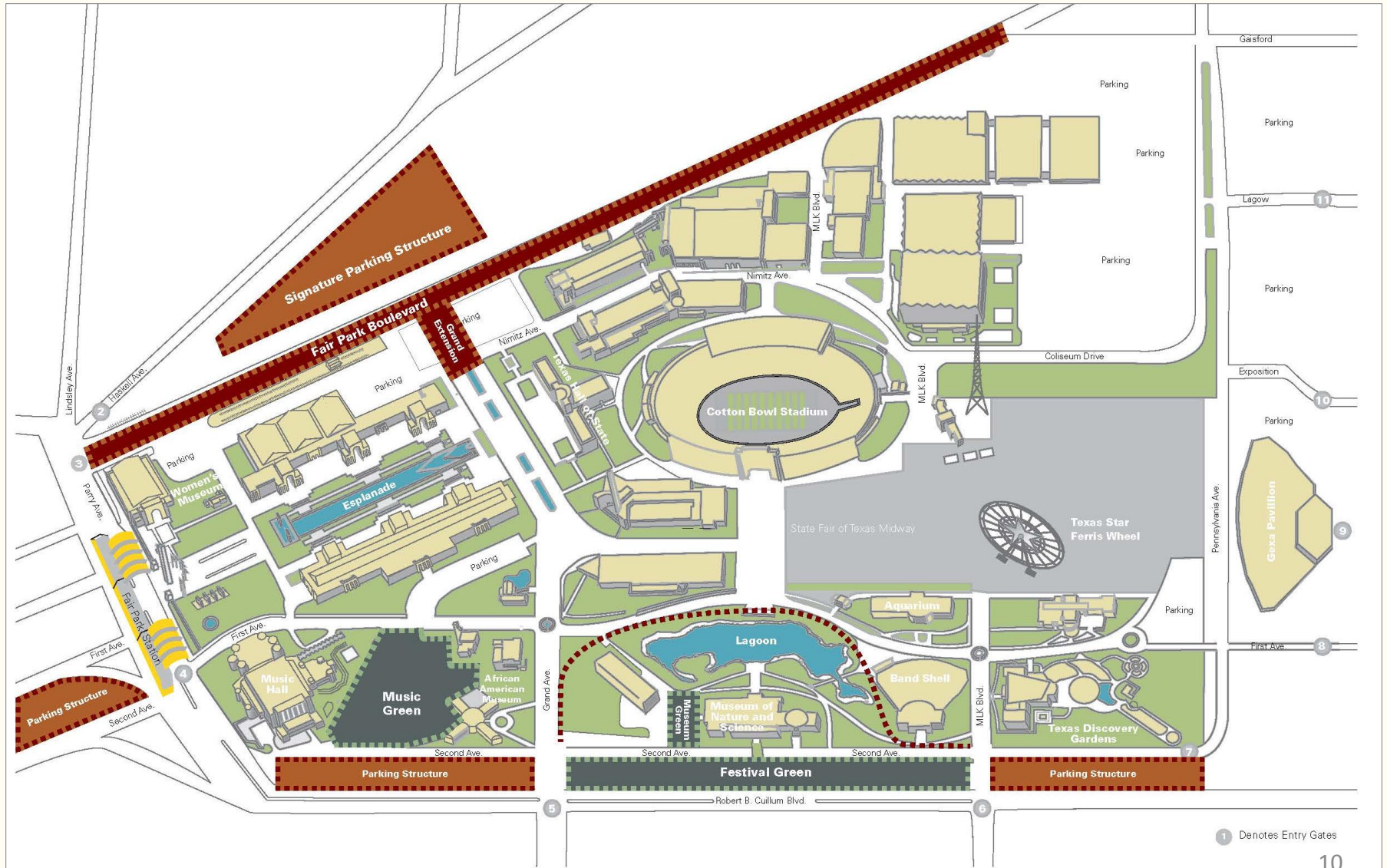


To “put the park back in Fair Park” and make it open and accessible, city should:

- Relocate fence
- Turn existing parking lots into green space, parks
- Condense parking in attractive, multi-level garages



FAIR PARK PROPOSED AREAS



1 Denotes Entry Gates

3. EMPOWER ONE BODY

- Governance structure is confusing, disjointed
- Organizations with contracts in the park include:

Office of Cultural Affairs

- African American Museum
- Hall of State (Dallas Historical Society)
- Natural History Building (Perot Museum)
- Fair Park Music Hall (DSM Management Group, Inc.)

Park and Recreation Board

- Ace Parking Management, Inc.
- American Red Cross
- Dallas Summer Musicals Parking
- Cotton Bowl (State Fair, OU, UT, city)
- Dallas Wind Symphony
- Daughters of the American Revolution – Jane Douglas Chapter
- Ed Campbell Concessions Co. (Coliseum, Cotton Bowl, Old Mill Inn)

- Friends of Fair Park
- Heart of Dallas Bowl
- La Kam International (Tower Bldg.)
- Live Nation
- Platinum Event Services (Event Security)
- State Fair of Texas
- Texas Snow Cones
- Velasquez Catering & Concessions (Grand Place)
- Weiss Enterprises (Automobile Building)

Pending

- Science Place I and II contract with Perot terminated in August
- Current plan: SP I will go to Park Dept., SPII will go to OCA

3. EMPOWER ONE BODY

- Need single, independent 501(c)(3) organization with diverse board, full authority over operations
- Diverse board of community-minded volunteers with fundraising experience
- Professional staff
- Reports to Park & Recreation Board



3. EMPOWER ONE BODY

Must keep State Fair of Texas in Fair Park



- Attracts three million visitors each year
- Reinvests in park improvements
- Willing to be flexible with boundaries
- Provides park enduring legacy, identity



3. EMPOWER ONE BODY

FUNDING – NEW ORGANIZATION

- City must demonstrate financial commitment to Fair Park to encourage private donations
- Private support should never be considered a substitute for the city's funding
- Consolidate city funds currently allocated to park, provide those funds to new organization for operations, maintenance of park
 - Estimated cost: \$15M annually

3. EMPOWER ONE BODY

FUNDING – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS



- Deferred maintenance, neglect has caused deterioration of historic buildings
- Investment will illustrate Dallas' dedication to Fair Park as valuable civic, historic asset
- Repairs and improvements estimated to cost \$478M

3. EMPOWER ONE BODY

FUNDING – STREET IMPROVEMENTS

- Necessary to ensure easy access, way-finding
- Investment in improving surrounding streets shows commitment to Fair Park
- Estimated to cost \$46.5 million



CONCLUSION

- Fair Park is an important part of our city's history with great potential for the future
- Now is the time to act
- With these recommendations, Fair Park will become Dallas' premier urban park – a park for all people

